

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Reserve

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

Issue #104
May 1980

JUN 16 '80

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE ALLOCATIONS..... Last May and June, as part of the SES allocation process, a number of agency positions were tentatively identified as SES positions. As of this date, many remain unfilled. At the same time, due to reorganizations and other management initiatives, potential SES positions are being developed that deserve consideration in the allocation process. Agencies are being encouraged to fill any tentatively allocated or vacant SES positions as soon as possible or inform the Office of Personnel that position management considerations dictate otherwise. We will be working with agencies in the next several weeks to update the allocation of slots. This will enable maximum utilization of our executive resources pool and free up some previous commitments for the Secretary's use. (Contact: Earl Hadlock, OP, ext. 73641)

DEPARTMENTAL TALENT BANK FOR HANDICAPPED APPLICANTS..... A vital part of the Department's Recruitment Program for the Handicapped is the establishment and maintenance of a Departmental Talent Bank. Based on the applications (SF-171s) received from handicapped individuals and other sources, the Office of Personnel is distributing to Agency Selective Placement Coordinators, on a monthly basis, a list of all handicapped persons, their training and experience, disability, and job sought. It should be noted that the Talent Bank contains individuals with a wide range of educational background technical skills (from Ph.D. to those with limited intellectual capabilities) as well as a variety of fields of interest (life science, clerical, etc.)

OP will furnish, upon request a copy of an applicant's SF-171 with the stipulation that the agency advise us of any action taken. Since the activation of the Departmental Talent Bank in March 1980, not a single request for an application has been received. Managers wishing to review the latest list of applicants should contact their Agency Selective Placement Coordinators. The effectiveness of this Talent Bank is what we make of it, nothing more, nothing less. (Contact: Peggy Leister, OP, ext. 72435)

AGENCY BUDGET REVIEWS/CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRESS..... Agencies are reminded that questions on civil rights progress may be expected during presentations to the USDA Budget Review Board. It is recommended that agencies integrate civil rights performance measures into overall agency planning, budgeting and decision making systems as part of management improvement programs. OEO is available to provide technical assistance in this area. (Contact: James Frazier, OEO, ext. 74256)

CIVIL RIGHTS TRAINING..... The fourth in a series of joint USDA-Department of Justice Civil Rights Training Workshops for USDA field staff was held in Washington May 14-16. Approximately 200 USDA employees in the civil rights area have received training this year. These workshops, which were compressed into three days for this Washington session, have provided training and practical exercises on the legal requirements for nondiscrimination in Federal assistance programs and various methods for carrying out these requirements. (Contact: Percy Luney, OEO, ext. 77327)

MEDIA RELATIONS COURSE.....The Graduate School is offering "Media Relations", a course designed to help people work productively with the press and other news-media. The course will provide vital data for information specialists, press officers, public affairs administrators, and communications spokespersons.

"Media Relations" will examine the challenges and responsibilities public information professionals face at all levels of the government. Participants will consider the relationships between the media and the press offices with an emphasis on avoiding problems and establishing credibility. The course will also discuss the techniques and methodologies used by different kinds of reporters, the investigative trends in journalism, and the power of various news organizations.

The fee is \$200. The course will be given at the National Press Building on June 17-19 and again on September 23-25. (Contact: Graduate School, ext. 73247)

WORD PROCESSING COUNCIL ANNUAL WORKSHOP.....The Graduate School is offering a two-day word processing workshop on May 29-30 in the Departmental Auditorium on Constitution Avenue between 12th and 14th Streets. Among the subjects to be covered are implementing an integrated system, network communications, NARS Standards and Office Productivity. Other important areas will also be discussed.

The cost is \$75 which includes two lunches. (Contact: Sheritta Cooper, Graduate School, ext. 73247)

UNION REPRESENTATION.....The number of Federal employees represented by union exclusive of the Postal Service, reached an all-time high of 1,245,998 last year according to data released by the Office of Personnel Management. This figure represents 61 percent of the work force. The previous high of 1,228,136, or 60 percent, was in 1978. In the Department of Agriculture, 31,000 of the approximately 85,000 permanent full-time employees are organized in recognized units. This is about 36% of the total.

In the last year, the number of units recognized Governmentwide decreased by 248 to 3,080. A major consolidation at the Social Security Administration contributed to this reduction.

In addition to the increase in union membership, the number of government employees covered by negotiated agreements increased by 21,178 to 1,148,822. (Contact: Gus Seeger, OP, ext. 74258)

SAFETY AND HEALTH ACTIVITIES.....

- OSHM has agreed to conduct an epidemiological feasibility study on the use of phenoxy herbicides by the FS. The purpose of the study will be to determine the potential health effects associated with the use of these herbicides over the past 30 years. (Contact: Neil Davis, OSHM, 472-7074)
- Two major industrial hygiene surveys were conducted recently at two APHIS screwworm eradication plants in Texas and Mexico. These studies were requested by APHIS and the Mexican Joint Commission to identify potential employee health problems. (Contact: John Teske, OSHM, 472-7074)

- In reponses to an OSHA notice in the Federal Register, OSHM is coordinating a Departmental response on the safety and health aspects of grain handling. This will be used by OSHA in the development of safety and health standards. (Contact: Joseph Cindrich, OSHM, 472-7074)

SAVINGS BOND CAMPAIGN RALLY.....Secretary Bob Bergland was the featured speaker at the 1980 Savings Bond Campaign Kick-Off Rally for USDA employees in the Jefferson auditorium, April 28. He endorsed the payroll saving bond program as one way to combat double digit inflation while building national as well as personal security.

Jerry Miles, USDA Savings Bond Coordinator announced that canvassers would be contacting each office during the month of May to explain payroll savings, a proven way to finance the future.

Gill Goff, Federal Payroll Savings Officer, described the education and retirement fund benfits that Energy Savings Bonds can provide for Federal employees and answered questions about the conversion from Series E bonds to this year's EE bonds. He also explained how bonds compare to other forms of investment. (Contact: Janine Benyus, FS, ext. 76957)

MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION AND OFFICE PRODUCTIVITY.....The Graduate School and the Information Resources Administration Conference (IRAC) have formed a partnership to assist departments and agencies in improving management of information and office productivity.

IRAC is an informal governmentwide organization interested in improving records management, files management, mail management, word processing, and data storage and retrieval including micrographics. Henry Attenberg, Chief, Records Systems and Analysis Branch, ESCS, is the new IRAC Chairperson.

A group from IRAC has formed a curriculum advisory committee to help the Graduate School identify, develop, offer and evaluate new courses in the information management fields.

As part of the IRAC program, open meetings are held each month in the Jefferson Auditorium. These are free to all employees. The next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m., to noon, June 19. The Topic will be "phototypesetting." The speakers will be Herbert Langford, "AM Varityper"; Jim McDonald, "Compugraphic"; and James Franz, "Mergenthal". (Contact: Ed Fulker, GS, ext. 73023)

CENTRAL SUPPLY STORES - CARD VALIDATION SYSTEM.....A computerized method for determining the validity of authorization cards presented at the time a purchase is made has been developed by the Personal Property Mangement Division, O&F.

This system will prevent misuse of cards, identify lost or stolen cards and, in general, control over-the-counter sales made in the Central Supply Self-Service Store.

The System became operation on April 4, 1980, and is running smoothly. (Contact: John Sutton, O&F, ext. 73141)

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES.....Deadline and publication dates for the next seven months are as follows:

Deadlines

June 11
July 16
August 13
September 10
October 15
November 12
December 17

Publication

June 16
July 21
August 18
September 15
October 20
November 17
December 22

Agencies and staff offices are encouraged to submit articles of interest to management officials of the department. All items submitted must be approved at the appropriate agency or staff office level prior to submission. Articles should be sent to Neil I. Van Vliet, Management Staff, Room 147-E. Please note that this is a change in room number.